

Contractor Agency Description and Requirements (Exceeding State Foster Home Licensing Rules or Contract)

1. ADCS will be updating the www.azkidsneedu.gov website with contractor information. Describe your agency and its specialties. Include your agency website url and contact information. Do not exceed 500 words.

AASK (Aid to Adoption of Special Kids) is a private non-profit charity that was founded in 1988 with the mission of bringing relationships to children in Arizona's foster care system. AASK understands how difficult yet rewarding it is to be a foster or adoptive parent. Consequentially AASK has designed all of its programs to support you in your crucial goal of providing a "family" relationship to children in care during this very difficult time in their lives.

AASK has designed its program around the children and families it serve. In addition to the traditional foster care program AASK offers specialized foster care programs for developmentally disabled, medically fragile and tribal affiliated children. AASK's Kinship foster care program provides unlicensed relative families with immediate case management services and support while they complete the licensing or certification processes. The Todos Los Niños (TLN) program offers bilingual, culturally relevant services to Latino families.

AASK's Mentoring Program connects youth with caring and supportive adults. As this relationship evolves, it has the potential to provide the child with a "family" connection even though the child lives in a non-family setting such as a group home or shelter. AASK's Sibling Initiative focuses on reconnecting brothers and sisters separated by the foster care system

AASK offers up to 144 hours (6 days) a year of free respite relief from the primary caregiver role to each foster family; including unlicensed kinship families. These valuable periods of relief are provided by qualified licensed foster homes. Because AASK does not want to discourage you from taking multiple children, AASK Respite hours are deducted at an hour to hour basis instead of hour per child. This means that an AASK family with four foster children can put all four children in respite for 144 hours instead of only 36 hours per child.

The 30-hour required licensing class (PS-MAPP) is offered in both English and Spanish. This training is presented at each of our three locations across the Valley and at various days and times for your convenience. Accelerated classes (6-8 weeks) are available.

Because AASK understands and respects the level of commitment our families bring to the children, AASK is committed to you. We believe it is important for AASK foster families, adoptive families, and mentors to know they can have quick and convenient access to us. That's why along with online 'live chat', work phone, cell phone and e-mail access, we have 3 locations across the Phoenix metropolitan area. Our offices in central Phoenix, Peoria, and our newest location in Chandler, offer access to AASK staff, training rooms and other supportive resources. An after-hours emergency number keeps you connected to us 24/7/365.

To ensure your success and support your family, we offer connections to on-staff nurses, support groups, behavioral specialists, advanced training classes and bilingual staff.

AASK has nearly 30 years of experience helping families. We are the largest agency in Maricopa & Pinal Counties whose exclusive focus is on children in foster care.

Contact us (602) 930-4900 info@aask-az.org www.aask-az.org

2. List and describe in detail any specific agency requirements or expectations of your agency that exceed the State foster home licensing rules or the requirements within this contract. This may include additional requirements regarding pets or pool fences, for example. Also include anything that may be considered added value, such as offering additional respite hours or a faith-based perspective.

| Name of Additional Requirement or Expectation | Is this Required? Yes or No | Reason |
|--|-----------------------------|--|
| Free tickets to local sporting events each year. | | AASK provides free tickets to Suns, Mercury, Cardinals, Coyotes, and D-backs games to our families allow them to create memorable experiences for the children placed in their care. |
| Free school supplies and holiday gifts | | AASK helps lesson the burden on foster families to meet the tangible needs of children in their home. We leverage our relationships within the community to provide back to school back packs, school supplies, and holiday gifts. |
| Family support that exceeds state minimums. | | AASK personnel not only make home visits as required by the State, we also are available to support families at CFT, IEP, and other meetings involving the children. |

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| Free post-placement support groups. | | AASK Family Support Specialists provide support groups that provide valuable techniques and information to foster and adoptive families caring for children with behavioral and developmental needs. |
| Open to working with all families | | AASK is a nonpartisan and nonsectarian organization and will work with same sex couples. |
| Established 'customer service' standards. | | AASK personnel make an extra effort to respect you and your entire family. We commit to responding to all correspondence within 2 business days and we will always be transparent in our communication with families. |
| Up to 6 days of free respite regardless of how many children are placed in your home. | | Because AASK does not want to discourage you from taking multiple children, AASK Respite hours are deducted at an hour to hour basis instead of hour per child. This means that an AASK family with four foster children can put all four children in respite for 144 hours instead of only 36 hours per child. |